

the technical data needed to maintain and repair.

So what is this ship's mission and what does it contribute to national security? Nothing.

The Navy says it plans to use the LCS for partner engagement, as a replacement for obsolete minesweepers for long-range fire capability, and for counterdrug activities. But the LCS are not well-suited for minesweeping due to their lack of endurance, and their already years-late mine countermeasure package isn't even operational.

Our top priority in national defense strategy is China and Russia. We can't waste scarce funds on costly LCS when there are more capable platforms like destroyers, attack submarines, and the new *Constellation*-class frigate. Most importantly, the cost of sustaining LCS isn't just felt in lost dollars, but lost lives.

The Navy has a severe undermanning problem. Our surface fleet is 15 percent undermanned compared to required levels for safe operation. The average sailor is overworked and gets 6 hours or less of sleep per night. A recent GAO report on pierside maintenance found undermanning was so bad on some ships that half of the electrician slots were empty. On others, the crew members had to work 80 to 100 hours per week to prepare to deploy.

On these ships, the operational tempo is so high, several sailors have left due to behavioral health needs. At least one has died from suicide. This is unacceptable, especially in the wake of the deadly *McCain* and *Fitzgerald* collisions that killed 17 sailors 5 years ago. The key contributors? Undermanning and fatigue.

We can and must prevent this. Let's decommission all nine ships.

GOD BLESS FIRST RESPONDERS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TONY GONZALES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the first responders in Uvalde. It has been 22 days since the terrible incident in Uvalde occurred, and many of the discussions have been about the victims. I will talk about some of the survivors. Some of those survivors are first responders.

In particular, one gentleman, Javier Martinez, is a lieutenant for the Uvalde Police Department. He was one of the first people on the scene. He engaged with the shooter. He was actually wounded. He goes in there and he clears the room.

But afterwards he wasn't done. There are a lot of copycat threats, and Javier Martinez, even though he was going through all that, went down to the high school, and he secured the high school. The next day, he was on duty.

He put his uniform on, and he went to work the next day and the next day.

There are many stories just like this. When the fire happened, everyone ran to the incident, and they didn't stop. Some of the law enforcement officers, Border Patrol agents, after they got done clearing that room, they went to other elementary schools. There are seven elementary schools in Uvalde. This happened days on.

I mention that because while the community of Uvalde, while my district is healing, there are all these heroes that are walking among us.

Another person I will mention is Ann. Ann is the director of the ER there in Uvalde. She helped save lives.

There are so many people that have just helped. After the cameras are gone, after everyone stops listening or even remembering what happened in Uvalde, we will be there as one community coming together.

Over a year ago, my community asked me for a mental health hospital. Last year, we secured \$2 million for that. When I hosted the President a couple weeks ago, we asked for \$23 million on that. Mental health is at the core of all of this. There is a mental health crisis not only in Uvalde, but I would argue across the country. We have to make sure that we are devoting the resources necessary to protect our children, to protect ourselves.

My whole community of Uvalde, I would argue, needs mental health assistance right now. A lot of us are getting that. My own staff, essentially, we turned into a FEMA office, and we were dealing with all these crises.

Someone reminded me yesterday that I essentially have relived this crisis 22 days now. A lot of us are in that exact same boat. I mention that to say, we have to get rid of this stigma behind mental health. We have to realize all of us, from a young age to an old age, go through things in life, and we need mental health professionals in order to get through that.

Today, I thank all the first responders in Uvalde for everything they are doing, the men and women, just like Javier Martinez, who put their uniform on, go to work. There are heroes walking among us that sometimes get forgotten. They are not forgotten today nor every other day. God bless them.

RECOGNIZING OAK HILL CHARTER SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate the staff, volunteers, and board members of Oak Hill Charter School in Caldwell County, North Carolina.

The school was unanimously approved by the North Carolina Charter Schools Advisory Board, and its doors will officially open this August.

This accomplishment is amplified by the fact that Oak Hill is one of only

two accelerated schools to earn this opportunity this year. Let me tell you, Madam Speaker, this is no small feat.

Recently, I received a heartfelt email from Kelly McIntyre, the board chair of the school. She marveled at how God has guided the journey of everyone involved at Oak Hill and how along the way the right people and resources came together in perfect harmony.

Kelly, I agree with you wholeheartedly. God's hand has been in your work every step of the way.

Right now, nearly every single class at Oak Hill has a waiting list. Families are beyond enthusiastic at this opportunity for their children.

The outpouring of support from the surrounding community must also be recognized. Donations of furniture, school supplies, and other essential items continue to stream in on a weekly basis, and volunteers continue without delay to see projects through.

Madam Speaker, there is a quote from American anthropologist Margaret Mead that encapsulates the story of Oak Hill perfectly: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

It is clear that these committed citizens are also working in the will of God. In Kelly's email to me, she remarked that, "It's the most amazing thing to see this mission that started as just a thought, a spark, grow into a force that I believe will be life-changing for many."

Madam Speaker, that sentiment is profound, and it is a direct reflection of the opportunity that charter schools provide across the country.

Parents, teachers, and communities recognize the value of charter schools because they challenge a failing status quo. Charter schools are guaranteed operational autonomy to provide rich alternatives to students and families. Most importantly, they provide educational freedom and choice, two fundamental principles that are desperately needed in education right now.

Instead of being held accountable to the education bureaucracy, charter schools are accountable to students, families, and their communities, as they should be, Madam Speaker.

Congratulations again to everyone at Oak Hill Charter School. The work you will undertake and the opportunities you will provide to our next generation of leaders in the coming months and years will be nothing short of spectacular.

May God continue to bless you in your mission of serving the Caldwell County community.

FARM BILL IMPACT SERIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, in preparation for reauthorizing the farm bill

in 2023, I rise today to deliver the eleventh installment of my farm bill impact series, where I am highlighting various aspects of the farm bill that deserve Congress' awareness and support. We need robust biosecurity in America not only because we need to eat in order to survive, but also because strong American agriculture will help keep our country free and self-determining as a Nation.

Manhattan, Kansas, the home of my alma mater, Kansas State University, is also home of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility or NBAF. This state-of-the-art 700,000-square foot facility will be a national asset that helps protect our Nation's agriculture against the threat and potential impact of serious animal diseases. Experts believe that 75 percent of new and emerging infectious animal diseases can be transmitted from animals to humans. NBAF will be home to the only maximum biocontainment space in the country, where USDA will conduct comprehensive research, develop vaccines and antivirals, and explore enhanced diagnostic and training capabilities.

The United States Department of Agriculture is currently working with the Department of Homeland Security to bring NBAF online by December and to begin establishing partnerships between two key sectors heavily invested in animal health: academia and industry. Working with scientists and other industry professionals, NBAF will create new safety and security guidelines that will be critical for the prevention of future pandemics. Currently, scientists are conducting this very important research in New York at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, which is more than 60 years old. NBAF will replace this aging facility, create 400 local jobs for Kansans, generate over \$100 million in total economic benefit for our State, and make Kansas the home of internationally recognized animal disease experts. NBAF isn't just an exciting development for Kansas, it also marks the future of biodefense research that will protect the United States and the rest of the world.

□ 1045

The 2018 farm bill contained special authorization for biosecurity planning and response, which helped make NBAF possible. That version of the farm bill explicitly mentioned the coordination of "tactical science activities . . . that protect the integrity, reliability, sustainability, and profitability of the food and agricultural system of the United States against biosecurity threats from pests, diseases, contaminants, and disasters." NBAF is a concrete example of the impact that we can have when we authorize the farm bill in careful and creative ways.

During National Agriculture Month in March, I brought House Agriculture Committee Republican leader GT Thompson on an ag tour of Kansas, where I was proud to show him NBAF.

The technology, scale, and international significance of the facility are truly second to none. Once fully operational in December, NBAF won't just support and protect agriculture; it will protect our country and the world.

I will be back on the floor soon to deliver another installment of my farm bill impact series and highlight more programs and titles within the bill that I believe Congress must understand and support to ensure that agriculture thrives in America.

IMPORTANCE OF LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to follow up on a speech that I gave in March about the importance of the farm bill emergency assistance programs like livestock indemnity.

Agriculture is a risky business, and Mother Nature is a tough business partner. Over the past couple of weeks, Kansas producers have been losing cattle due to extreme temperatures, and qualified producers will be able to recoup some of their losses through the livestock indemnity program.

Just like the flooding and wildfires we saw in Natoma and the surrounding areas last year, this is another example of how essential the farm bill emergency assistance programs are to our country's food supply and the people who produce it.

Emergency programs like livestock indemnity are investments in the future of our country, and they help ensure that America remains food secure and self-determining as a Nation.

Natural disasters, diseases, and weather emergencies happen, and we can't afford to let them cripple the business of the men and women who keep us fed, fueled, and clothed. That is why emergency assistance programs like livestock indemnity must remain strong in the 2023 farm bill.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 47 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LANGEVIN) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Sovereign God, we pray to You again on behalf of the Ukrainian people. They continue to call to You, O Lord, in their distress. They call to You, our God. Hear their voices.

Relieve them of the hardship of their oppression.

Free them from the abuse of their captors.

Loose them from the chains of their enemy and give them the freedom of their own sovereignty and the blessing of peace in their homeland.

Then gracious God, allow us, we who are observers to this travesty, to be inspired by the faith of the Ukrainians in the face of their adversity. Open our eyes to the spiritual warfare being waged which has called forth their unshakable faith in You. They are living proof of the victory they have already won in You.

For they are hard-pressed on every side, but not crushed. They are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

Almighty God, may we receive their testimony of Your saving grace. Then may we be found as steadfast in the living of our days.

In Your merciful name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. RUIZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 407. An act to provide redress to the employees of Air America.

S. 1787. An act to amend title 28 of the United States Code to prevent the transfer of actions arising under the antitrust laws in which a State is a complainant.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 117-81, the Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Commission on the National Defense Strategy:

Eric S. Edelman of Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Republican Leader, appoints the following individuals to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: